



## **FACT SHEET: NSA Urban Area Boundaries & Revisions (July 2008)**

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### **Creation of Urban Areas:**

- The U.S. Congress designated 13 cities and towns as "Urban Areas" in the National Scenic Area: Cascade Locks, Hood River, Mosier, and The Dalles in Oregon; and Bingen, Carson, Dallesport, Home Valley, Lyle, North Bonneville, Stevenson, White Salmon, and Wishram in Washington.
- Congress established the boundaries of the Urban Areas when it enacted the Scenic Area Act.
- Urban Areas are typically larger than city limits to allow some expansion of cities; generally based on Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) in Oregon.

### **Scenic Area protections in Urban Areas:**

- Urban Areas are exempt from development rules of the National Scenic Area Management Plan. Cities or counties regulate development in Urban Areas.

### **Boundary Revisions:**

- Upon application by a County, the Gorge Commission is authorized to make minor revisions of Urban Area boundaries by a majority vote of two-thirds of Commissioners (including a majority (4) from each state) if 4 criteria are satisfied:
  - A. A demonstrable need exists to accommodate long-range urban population growth requirements or economic needs consistent with the Management Plan.
  - B. Revision of Urban Area boundaries would be consistent with the purposes of the Scenic Area Act and the standards established in Section 6 of the Act.
  - C. Revision of Urban Area boundaries would result in maximum efficiency of land uses within and on the fringe of existing Urban Areas.
  - D. Revision of Urban Area boundaries would not result in the significant reduction of agricultural lands, forest lands, or open spaces.

### **What's Next**

- At its June 10, 2008 meeting, the Gorge Commission decided to begin consideration of three policy questions relating to urban area boundary revisions: defining "minor revision," establishing a framework for a prioritization of lands that could be considered for boundary revisions, and regional analysis of boundary revisions. The Commission plans to consider these issues again at a work session on September 9, 2008.
- Hood River, Wasco, and Klickitat Counties are considering applications to revise the UA boundaries for the cities of Hood River, The Dalles, and Lyle. No applications have been submitted to the Commission. The timing of possible applications is unknown.
- After the Commission receives an application from a County, staff reviews the information for completeness, there's a public comment period, then a Director's report is written, then a public hearing(s) is held to make a decision.
- Opportunities for public involvement will be provided during a review process. Anyone interested also should look for local public meetings and hearings in Hood River, The Dalles, and Lyle.

### **Other Resources**

- Additional information available from the Gorge Commission office includes: Section 4(f) of the NSA Act; Commission Rule 350-40; the *Urban Areas Boundary Revisions Handbook, 1992* (an advisory handbook to assist local jurisdictions through the boundary revision process); and minutes from Commission work sessions held December 11, 2007 and June 10, 2008.

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